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Two Secondary Schools Selected to Represent Vermont at Regional Conference on School Transformation

The Schools Will Share Successful Strategies with Colleagues from Across New England

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Two Vermont public secondary schools—**Windham Regional Career Center** and **Milton High School**—have been invited to represent their state at a regional conference on effective strategies for improving teaching and learning in the 21st century. The conference, **High School Redesign in Action** (newenglandssc.org/conference), will take place on April 9, 2010, and is sponsored by the New England Secondary School Consortium in collaboration with the departments of education for Vermont, Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. The New England Secondary School Consortium is a regional educational partnership committed to fostering forward-thinking innovations in the design and delivery of public secondary education across the region.

High School Redesign in Action will bring together teams of high school educators in Nashua, New Hampshire, to exchange effective school-improvement programs and practices with their colleagues from across New England. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that every public high school student in the five partner states receives an education that will prepare them for success in the colleges, careers, and communities of the 21st century, and each participating school was selected by Consortium leaders as models of proven educational innovation. All the selected schools have made significant progress raising student achievement, graduation rates, or college-enrollment numbers, among other indicators of educational accomplishment. **More than ninety educators from across Vermont will be attending the conference.**

"We are excited to see so many Vermont schools participating in this conference," said **Rae Ann Knopf, Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Department of Education**. "It is a great opportunity for them to showcase their own work and learn from others in New England with similar goals. It's heartening to know so many of our school leaders are committed to expanding learning opportunities and providing viable pathways for our young people to pursue postsecondary aspirations."

Windham Regional Career Center created the **Windham Regional Collegiate High School Program**, which reaches out to first-generation high school students and others who may not have succeeded in traditional classroom settings, offering these students the opportunity to spend the last two years of high school enrolled in an aspirations-building course of study that earns them both a high school diploma and college credit they can put toward a postsecondary degree.

Milton High School developed a comprehensive school-improvement process focused on embedding 21st century skills (such as creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration) in every part of the school, which led to the development of new lessons and teaching strategies, the creation of a one-to-one computing initiative that provided a laptop to every student in this year's freshman class, and the delivery of the professional development needed for teachers to make 21st century learning successful in every classroom.

For detailed descriptions of the conference presentations:
newenglandssc.org/conference/agenda/spotlight/

"We are truly honored to be able to share the impressive work these remarkable high schools are doing," said **David Ruff, executive director of the Great Schools Partnership, the New England Secondary School Consortium's lead coordinating organization**. "As a regional partnership, the Consortium is bringing together educators from across the region to achieve the common goals that our principals and teachers all individually work toward every day. This conference is evidence that New England has a wealth of talented educators, and that we can come together across state lines to exchange the effective strategies we truly know will work for our students."

The Consortium is funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the largest philanthropy in New England focused exclusively on education, and coordinated by Great Schools Partnership, a nonprofit educational-support organization in Portland, Maine. The Nellie Mae Education Foundation has committed \$1 million to support the initial eighteen months of the Consortium's work, which includes a \$500,000 partnership grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

For more information:
newenglandssc.org

Vermont's High School Redesign in Action Presentations

Title: Windham Regional Collegiate High School Program

School: Windham Regional Career Center, Brattleboro, Vermont

Presenters: Ron Stahley (superintendent), David Coughlin (director), and Tom Yahn (program director)

Website: www.wrccvt.com

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Title: A 21st Century Curriculum: Relevant, Project-based, Student-centered Learning

School: Milton High School, Milton, Vermont

Presenters: Kerry Sewell (director of curriculum), Anne Blake (co-principal), Scott Thompson (assistant principal), Katri O'Neill (technology integration specialist), Karen Hammond (teacher), Angela King (teacher), Jason Gorczyk (teacher), Amanda Notman (special educator).

Website: www.mtsd-vt.org/mms-mhs/index.html

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